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DE RUEHPO #0416 1811955
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FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8497
INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE
RUEHAO/AMCONSUL CURACAO 1055
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 1561
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1560
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC

UNCLAS PARAMARIBO 000416

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR WHA/CAR LLUFTIG, INL/LP FOR NBOZZOLO, KBROWN
DEPT OF JUSTICE FOR OPDAT (ROBERT LIPMAN)
CARACAS FOR LEGATT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KCRM](#) [SNAR](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [NS](#)

SUBJECT: ASSET FORFEITURE AND FINANCIAL INVESTIGATIONS
TRAINING A SUCCESS IN SURINAME

¶1. (SBU) Summary. Assistant U.S. attorney Leslie Westphal and FBI special agent Joseph Boyer conducted an intensive three-day workshop on utilizing asset forfeiture and preparing financial prosecutions with Surinamese prosecutors, investigators, and a legislative expert from May 22-24. The workshop's small group atmosphere fostered in-depth discussion with participants expressing appreciation for the practical advice received. The workshop was the first of three such trainings with the next planned for the fall. The program's goals are to assist Suriname in tapping into a potential source of significant funding for the equipment needs of Suriname's law enforcement agencies, enhance criminal deterrence by depriving criminals of the fruits of their crimes, and through sound financial investigation remove "working capital" and other assets from criminals, thereby greatly disrupting their ability to operate and expand in Suriname. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Surinamese participants included Solicitor General Roy Baidjnath Panday, Police Commissioner Krishna Mathoera, who has oversight over financial investigations, three public prosecutors, two financial investigators, and a legislative expert from the Ministry of Justice and Police. The program featured a reciprocal exchange of experiences and insights, and served to sharpen the Surinamese participants focus on asset forfeiture as a law enforcement tool. Westphal and Boyer delivered advice on legislative and procedural changes needed to ensure forfeited proceeds benefit police and prosecutorial agencies in Suriname. They also advised how Suriname could amend existing legislation to allow the sale of assets prior to a final judicial verdict to retain the value of the asset should it eventually be forfeited. The workshop also covered financial investigation best practices with tips on following the financial trail of money launderers. There were also opportunities to discuss U.S methods of storing and maintaining seized assets and safeguarding of evidence, crucial to any prosecution.

¶3. (SBU) The training used case studies to link theory with practice. The inability of the Government of Suriname (GOS) to benefit from seized aircraft took center stage. Since 2000 the GOS has seized seven small airplanes, but due to legislative gaps, a plodding judiciary, and

bureaucratic impediments, the aircraft sit rotting, unused and unsold. In tackling this and other similar cases, the participants, who often complained of limited resources and insufficient legislation, were encouraged to 'think outside the box' to develop ways around their obstacles. During the training, participants began incorporating their notes and conclusions into a comprehensive workbook on asset forfeiture and financial prosecutions that will serve as a useful reference tool after the workshop series concludes.

COMMENT

14. (SBU) Despite heavy workloads and busy schedules, participants actively took part in the training with genuine interest, giving positive feedback and voicing their appreciation for the opportunity to consult with U.S. experts. They expressed appreciation that the training was not a one-time event, but was part of a string of planned trainings on the topic. The ministerial legislative expert, who also sits on a recently installed commission to examine gaps in Suriname's asset forfeiture regime, said he now had more tools to make an asset forfeiture framework suitable for Suriname and will incorporate what he learned into his commission's recommendations.

BARNES